

Protecting Children's Health

MATCH

COALITION, INC.

December 15, 2002

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Chairman Michael K. Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to oppose changes in the FCC's media ownership rules that would result in a reduction of independent owned broadcast stations in my community, and particularly the loss or consolidation of local news operations. I serve as the Executive Director for Mobilize Against Tobacco for Children's Health (MATCH), a Connecticut state coalition of organizations dedicated to reducing the deadly toll of tobacco use. To further this goal, MATCH and its respective partners advocate at the state and local level for policy change and work to educate the public about the harms of tobacco use.

Diverse, local television coverage is essential to achieve both of these goals.

Local media coverage, especially television and reporting, is an essential part of our effort to pass tobacco control legislation at the state and local level. New laws designed to protect the public health from dangers like second-hand smoke face formidable opposition from the tobacco industry lobby. In order to counter that influence, local electronic news coverage provides an avenue to reach Connecticut citizens directly.

Mobilize Against Tobacco for Children's Health

Local television news coverage also helps MATCH educate the public about tobacco control issues. Working to reduce tobacco use and protecting children from tobacco are policies the majority of Connecticut residents support. Despite this support, the public generally lacks specific information about tobacco control issues including the dangers of second-hand smoke and tobacco industry marketing to children. Based upon the success of our outreach efforts to schools and communities, we believe the public appreciates this information and is generally interested to learn more about the issue.

I am concerned that any further consolidation of local news departments will limit our ability to communicate with Connecticut citizens. More newsworthy issues exist than local television outlets to cover them. Competition to acquire coverage for press conferences and public events is fierce, especially in the context of other important issues. Fewer local news teams would ultimately mean that fewer press conferences and public events would receive any television coverage.

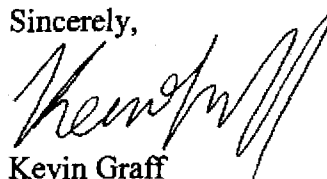
This year, MATCH sent a video news release about a secondhand smoke advertising campaign in support of clean air legislation to all Hartford television stations. Yet only one, the ABC affiliate WTNH, ran a story about the campaign. The segment included an interview with House Speaker Moira Lyons, a legislator opposing the legislation. As a result of this story, in part, Representative Lyons received a large number of contacts from constituents.

But for WTNH's coverage of this story, viewers in the Hartford media market would likely have missed the story entirely. If the WTNH local news team did not exist, the ability of Connecticut citizens to play an active role in this public policy debate would

have been limited. Consolidation of news outlets would restrict our ability in the future to engage the public in similar efforts.

As the FCC considers whether to retain certain ownership rules, please take our concerns into consideration. The public interest is well served by a diverse, locally relevant media market place through which advocates can communicate with and educate the public. Ownership rules that prevent broadcast consolidation are therefore essential.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Graff', with a stylized, flowing script.

Kevin Graff
Executive Director
MATCH

Two Princess Road

Lawrenceville, NJ 08648-2302

609 896-1766

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<http://www.msnj.org>

Medical Society of New Jersey



NJBreathes

December 15, 2002

Mr. Michael K. Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to oppose changes in the FCC's media ownership rules that would result in a reduction of independent owned broadcast stations in my community, and particularly the loss or consolidation of local news operations. I serve as the Director of Public Health & Medical Accreditation for the Medical Society of New Jersey, a membership organization representing doctors. My role at the Society is to advocate on behalf of physicians at the state and local level and also to educate the public about important public health and healthcare issues. Diverse, local television coverage is essential to achieve both of these goals.

Local media coverage, especially television and radio, is an essential part of our advocacy and education efforts. Local television news coverage provides a direct channel through which to educate the public about important issues such as tobacco control, immunization and obesity to name a few.

I am concerned that any further consolidation of local news departments will limit our ability to disseminate information in New Jersey. Local television and radio coverage in New Jersey is scarce because the state is situated directly between the large New York and Philadelphia media markets. As a result, coverage of local New Jersey news events is often overshadowed by news emanating from these two markets. In fact, the Medical Society has found it necessary to hire a media consultant to maximize local news coverage. Any reduction in news outlets or news departments would only exacerbate the current difficulty associated with acquiring news coverage.

Mr. Michael K. Powell

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December 15, 2002

As the FCC considers whether to retain certain ownership rules, please take these concerns into consideration. The public interest is well served by a diverse, locally relevant media market place through which advocates can communicate with and educate the public. Ownership rules that prevent broadcast consolidation are therefore essential.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence Downs". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and a stylized "D".

Lawrence Downs, JD
Director
Public Health & Medical Accreditation

/lj

MARYLAND CITIZENS' HEALTH INITIATIVE

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www.healthcareforall.com

Vincent DeMarco, Executive Director

December 17, 2002

Chairman Michael K. Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to oppose changes in the FCC's media ownership rules that would result in a reduction of independent owned broadcast stations in my community, and particularly the loss or consolidation of local news operations. I serve as the Executive Director of the Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative, a citizen organization dedicated to expanding healthcare access to every Marylander, regardless of income. To achieve this goal, we advocate at the state level for healthcare expansion policies including making prescription drugs more affordable for seniors and the uninsured.

As part of our advocacy efforts, the Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative educates citizens about important healthcare problems and policy options for addressing those problems. Diverse, local television coverage is an essential ingredient of our education efforts. Local television news coverage provides a direct, inexpensive channel to educate the public. While Marylanders care about the issue of healthcare access, they often lack basic information about the topic. Local news coverage therefore is one of our best options through which to provide this information.

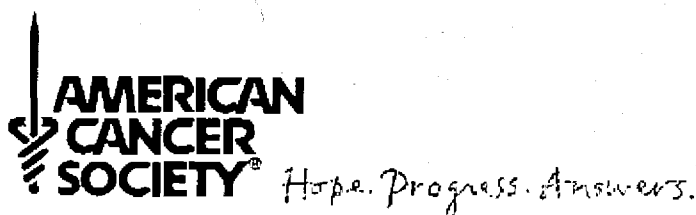
I am concerned that any further consolidation of local news departments will limit our ability to disseminate public interest information. Specifically in Montgomery and Prince George's counties, competition with the Washington, D.C. media market reduces the press coverage available for local Maryland issues. Sometimes press coverage is entirely unavailable as high profile Washington news stories dominate. Any reduction in news outlets or news departments would only make this difficult situation worse. Fewer independent local news teams would surely result in less coverage for Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative press conferences and public events.

As the FCC considers whether to retain certain ownership rules, please take our concerns into consideration. The public interest is well served by a diverse, locally relevant media market place through which advocates can communicate with and educate the public. Ownership rules that prevent broadcast consolidation are therefore essential.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vincent DeMarco', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Vincent DeMarco
Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative

EASTERN
DIVISION

December 18, 2002

Chairman Michael K. Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to oppose changes in the FCC's media ownership rules that would result in a reduction of independent owned broadcast stations in my community and particularly the loss or consolidation of local news operations. I serve as the Associate Director of Advocacy for the New York City American Cancer Society (ACS), an organization dedicated to reducing the cancer burden in New York. The issues reflected in this letter represent my experience as a representative for the American Cancer Society and do not necessarily express the views shared by the organization.

Local media coverage, especially television and reporting, is an essential part of our advocacy and education efforts. Local television news coverage provides a direct, inexpensive channel to educate the public about important issues like secondhand smoke and access to mammograms. In a media market as expensive as New York's, paying for

commercial or advertisements is not a practical alternative for a nonprofit organization like the American Cancer Society.

I am concerned that any further consolidation of local news departments will limit our ability to communicate with New Yorkers. The level of competition for press coverage in a city of 8 million can be at times insurmountable. Often, press coverage is simply not available for important health issues as high profile news stories occupy local broadcast news teams. Any reduction in broadcast news outlets or news departments would only make a difficult situation even more challenging. Fewer independent local news teams would ultimately mean that fewer American Cancer Society press conferences and public events would receive coverage.

As the FCC considers whether to retain certain ownership rules, please take our concerns into consideration. The public interest is well served by a diverse, locally relevant media market place through which advocates can communicate with and educate the public. Ownership rules that prevent broadcast consolidation are therefore essential.

Sincerely,

Carimine Rivetti
American Cancer Society

Jennifer Wallace-Brodeur
Public Policy and Public Relations Consulting
25 Pennington Drive
Burlington, VT 05401
802-651-9773

December 18, 2002

Chairman Michael K. Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to oppose changes in the FCC's media ownership rules that would result in a reduction of independently owned broadcast stations in my community, and particularly the loss or consolidation of local news operations. I am political consultant with eight years of experience advocating for public interest issues in Vermont. My past clients include non-profit organizations working on numerous policy issues related to public health and senior citizens.

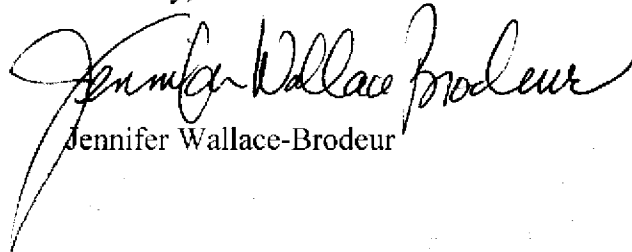
My advocacy involves education of the public about issues relevant to them both at the federal, state and community level. Vermont television, radio and newspaper coverage provides the public with information about these kinds of locally relevant issues. Therefore, FCC rules designed to preserve diverse, independent media outlets serve the public interest.

As a result of the elimination of radio ownership rules, Vermont now has virtually no independent local news coverage anywhere in the state. Radio outlets that once had local reporters and covered local events, have been consolidated and regionalized, effectively ending local radio news. In light of what has happened to radio in Vermont, I

fear a rollback of national broadcast ownership restrictions will result in similar television ownership and viewpoint consolidation. I therefore urge you to retain national ownership rules to prevent this from happening.

As the FCC considers whether to retain certain ownership rules, please take my concerns into consideration. The public interest is well served by a diverse, locally relevant media market place through which advocates can communicate with and educate the public. Ownership rules that prevent broadcast consolidation are therefore essential.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jennifer Wallace Brodeur". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jennifer Wallace-Brodeur